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challenge

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BUSH AND KERRY: TWO FACES OF WAR AND POLICE STATE

WASHINGTON, D.C. June 5 — Despite steady rain, over 2,000 people protested the Iraq war and occupation today. PLP brought a small contingent of workers, students, sailors, and marines to the march to drive home two key points: the fight against racism in the U.S. must be a central part of any anti-war movement, and only a revolution against capitalism — not the election of "anybody but Bush" — will end imperialist war.

Demonstrators in Italy

We spread these ideas through a bullhorn rally to hundreds of the marchers as they left the park for Secretary of "Defense" Donald Rumsfeld's house, as well as by distributing over 250 CHALLENGES to marchers eager for our revolutionary message. We also passed out over 400 leaflets urging people to join a protest against police brutality on June 18 at police headquarters in Palmer Park, Maryland. About 20 marchers signed the petition demanding the re-opening of the Archie Elliott case through the indictment of the two cops who gunned him down 11 years ago while he sat in a police cruiser with his hands handcuffed behind his back.

The fight against revisionism (phony leftists) is still critical. Although some speakers correctly said Kerry was no better than Bush, the main thrust of their message was how evil Bush is. NIcholas Berg's father spoke movingly and correctly about the viciousness of Bush, but advocated strict non-violent direct action. Thus, the revisionists and their pacifist allies leading this event play into the shell game of electoral politics. The presence of our sailors and marines, who met briefly with a group of families of military personnel in Iraq, demonstrates our Party's seriousness about its line — the way you end capitalism is with revolution, and that revolution must be fought for among the youth in the military as well as in the workplaces and in the cities. Let's continue to win more anti-war activists to this strategy! ✪

PLP Answers 'Anybody-But-Bush-ism' at SF Anti-war March

SAN FRANCISCO, JUNE 5 — PLP's communist contingent chanted, "John Kerry's No Solution — It's Time to Fight for Revolution!" and "Asian, Latin, black and white, Workers of the World, Unite!" Workers from many different countries joined our chants and pumped their fists in solidarity. An older worker who spotted our banner approached a young Party member, saying, "About time someone says it like that: 'Fight for Communism.' Put it right out there! Keep it up.'"

We passed out 1,500 flyers with the headline, "It's Bigger Than Bush!" Many people nodded their heads at this title. The flyer explained that war and fascism are growing in the U.S., not because of a special Bush plan, but to serve the needs of the whole capitalist class, which controls the electoral system. Kerry serves the same big corporate bosses that Bush does. Unlike the liberal anti-war leadership, our flyer showed that Kerry — with his plans for more troops in Iraq — is as dangerous as Bush. This analysis was made possible by the use of CHALLENGE'S editorials and our PLP study group.

As our contingent neared the end of the march, we encountered a group of pro-war, Zionist (pro-Israeli fascist) demonstrators. Protected by a squadron of cops, they marched right into the middle of the anti-war demonstrators. The liberal and pacifist politics of the anti-war march allowed these fascists to barge right in, while the demonstration slipped by on the sides. But when our contingent spotted the Zionists, a young comrade started to chant, "Death to the Fascists, Power to the Workers!" Then a veteran communist led our contingent to confront them face-to-face, where the chant continued even louder.

Many marchers preferred to avoid confrontation, but several chanted with us. Some others were ready for confrontation but chanted, "Free Palestine" instead. These were among the most militant marchers besides PLP, but without a movement based on multi-racial, international, working-class solidarity, there will be no real freedom from exploitation and war, in Palestine or anywhere else.

As war and fascism grow, it's crucial that PLP also grow. While 2.1 million are locked in a racist prison system, and working-class soldiers are sent to kill and die in Iraq, we need more than peaceful marches — we need nothing less than communism. At the next anti-war march, our contingent will bring twice as many of our friends, to give them a taste of what it means to bring revolutionary communism as an alternative to "Anybody-But-Bush-ism." ✪

REAGAN BEST PREZ BIG BOSSES, FASCISTS ET AL EVER HAD

The ruling class and its bought-and-paid-for media are going nuts trying to outdo each other in slobbering over the "legacy" of Ronald Reagan. But this arch-anticommunist's record matches any other president in its anti-working class fervor. After having spent a decade as a PR hack for General Electric and a career "fighting communists" in the Screen Actors Guild, Reagan upped the ante as president. Here's a short list:

☠ **He fired 10,000 striking air controllers and destroyed their union** (ironically, the only union that endorsed him for president) and replaced them with scabs from the military, launching decades of scabbing (which the labor misleaders did nothing to oppose).

☠ **He cut taxes for the rich** while initiating taxes on workers' unemployment and disability benefits.

☠ **On Reagan's watch Social Security taxes rose to a level surpassing income taxes** for most workers, creating a surplus which was then used to finance the biggest "peacetime" military spending increase in history.

☠ **His administration accelerated the racist budget cuts initiated by President Carter**, cutting social services (including funding for Alzheimer's research!) to the bone, especially affecting black and Latin workers in the cities, a racist attack that eventually spread to the whole working class. Homelessness became a mass phenomenon.

☠ **Reagan's boys classified ketchup as a "vegetable"** in order to reduce the cost of children's school lunches.

☠ **He sent 300 Marines to Lebanon who then got blown away**, sending Reagan home with his tail between his legs.

☠ **To "erase" that defeat he invaded tiny Grenada**, overthrowing a government friendly to Castro, on the pretext that some Cuban construction workers were building an airfield there,

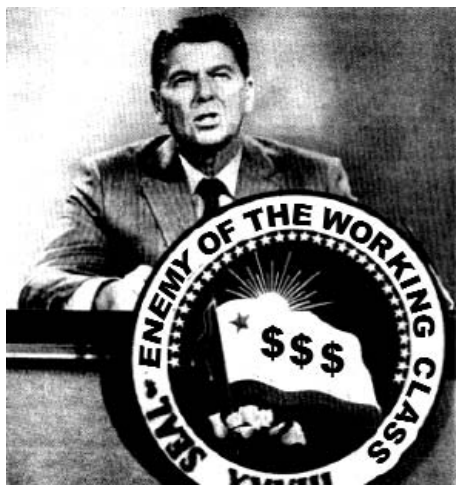
☠ **Reagan's CIA trained the death squads** used to murder 70,000 peasants in El Salvador.

☠ **Reagan backed Guatemala's General Rios Montt (a born-again Christian, AKA: the butcher of Guatemala), who seized power in a military coup in 1982** and unleashed a reign of terror that killed 70,000, 90% Mayan Indians, in 18 months. On Dec. 4, 1982, Reagan met with the dictator and declared, "President Rios Montt is a man of great personal integrity…. I know he wants to improve the quality of life for all Guatemalans and to promote social justice."

☠ **His administration surpassed Watergate with the Iran-Contra scandal**, having Oliver North send arms to Iran's Ayatollahs and then use the profits to fund the Contras in Nicaragua, torturing and killing tens of thousands there. He had the CIA flying supplies to the Contras and using the same planes to transport drugs back to Arkansas (covered up by a special state agency established by then Governor Bill Clinton), drugs that were used to create the crack-cocaine epidemic in the inner cities.

☠ **When Reagan went to the 1984 D-Day memorial**, he made a "side trip" to a Bitburg, Germany, cemetery to honor Hitler's S.S. storm troopers.

☠ **The Reagan administration built up and supported Saddam Hussein** in the latter's 1980s war with Iran, sending Donald Rumsfeld to Baghdad to negotiate deals supplying Saddam with weapons, intelligence information on targets in Iran, location of Iranian oil tankers in the Persian Gulf



and cluster bombs to drop on Iranian troops.

• **Reagan's CIA continued Carter's campaign in Afghanistan,** spending $3 billion to build up an anti-Soviet jihad among Muslims that trained Osama bin Laden and his terrorists, and which later produced Al Qaeda and the Taliban.

Reagan's attacks on workers marked him as a Grade A enemy of the international working class. Good riddance. He should only rot in hell.✪

Without Soviet Red Army, Would Have Been No D-Day

All the hoopla of the 60th anniversary of D-Day — which will be milked for all it's worth in the Bush/Chirac/Schroeder (and Putin, no less!) "celebration" in France, and in the A&E special on Eisenhower — further spreads the myth that the U.S. defeated Nazi fascism and won World War II. The soldiers who fought from D-Day onward certainly deserve to be honored — but not by the hypocritical imperialists leading the ceremonies who are very ready to send youth to kill and be killed on behalf of the bosses' profits. However, this outpouring barely mentions the tens of millions of heroes from the Soviet Union, its working class and its Red Army, who saved Europe and the workers of the world from fascism.

The rash of pro-Western propaganda claims that if D-Day had failed, the Nazis would have shifted their troops in France to the East and possibly defeated the Soviets. But this turns everything on its head. When the U.S.-Britain-led Atlantic Alliance landed in Normandy — an invasion that had been postponed for two years and was finally launched to reach Berlin before the Red Army— the Soviets had already been engaging 80% of the Nazi army on the Eastern Front for 2½ years. They had won the Battle of Stalingrad, which Western historians agree was the turning point of the Second World War. The truth is the exploits of the Red Army against the Nazis in the East is what GUARANTEED the success of D-Day in the West against an enemy already considerably weakened by the Red Army.

Had the Hitlerites defeated the Soviets, they could have shifted most of their 180 divisions to the West and the U.S.-led forces could not have even attempted to land in France. More likely there would have been a Nazi invasion of Britain and the bombing of the U.S. If the U.S.-led Alliance had attempted a D-Day after a Hitler victory in the East, the Nazis would probably have driven the Allies into the sea.

As CHALLENGE has been reporting for 40 years, and which the New York Times just "discovered" this past February 21 (see CHALLENGE, 3/17/04), "The war fought on the Eastern Front is arguably the single most important chapter in modern military history."

The Times admits, "The D-Day invasion and the Battle of the Bulge…tend to dominate America's conception of the Allied defeat of Germany…." [in large part due to the U.S. media's phony portrayal of the war, led in no small part by this same N. Y. Times]. The Times finally recognizes that, "The decisive impact of America's erstwhile ally was often deliberately downplayed in

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Soviets Beat 80% of Nazi Army While U.S. Bosses Backed Hitler

While 10,300 Allied soldiers died during the D-Day landings (6,000 U.S. and 4,300 British and Canadian), on the Eastern Front hundreds of thousands of deaths occurred in each battle. The Battle of Moscow alone involved over three million soldiers and 2,000 tanks. The Soviets used half its army and the Germans one-third of its forces in that struggle. In contrast, the Germans used 50,000 to 70,000 troops at El Alamein, an important battle in North Africa.

Eventually, almost 80% of the Third Reich's military might was lost on the Eastern Front. It had 10 million casualties as well as losing 48,000 armored and assault vehicles and 167,000 artillery pieces. This vast difference between the two fronts stemmed from the fact that the Nazis were welcomed by "5th columns" — local fascists — in France and elsewhere in the West, leading to a relatively easy victory. France fell in six weeks. However, in the former Soviet Union, the 5th columnists had been eliminated from the Red Army and civilian life.

Hitler aimed to smash the communist Soviet Union, a fond hope of the Western imperialists. Tony Benn (a Labor MP) was quoted as saying: "I've got…at home the captured German Foreign Office documents reporting what Lord Halifax, the British Foreign Secretary, said on behalf of Chamberlain to Hitler. He said, 'I've come, Herr Chancellor, to congratulate you on destroying Communism in Germany and acting as a bulwark against Communism in Russia.'" http://www.abc.net.au/religion/stories/s1087072.htm

Senator Harry Truman (who succeeded Roosevelt as President in 1945) had publicly wished both sides would bleed each other to death in the East. The Nazis' blitzkrieg attacks from the 1939 invasion of Poland until the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 were fueled with oil provided by Esso (now Exxon) and used trucks supplied by GM and Ford subsidiaries in Germany. IBM, Union Carbide, Goodrich, DuPont, GE, Kodak, JP Morgan, and Westinghouse all helped the Nazi war machine early in the war and even after the U.S. declared war on the fascist Axis. (See "The Myth of the Good War, the U.S. during WW2," by Canadian historian Jacques Pauwels; quoted in the Spanish website Rebelion.org, 6/07/04 "Why Ford, GM, Esso Armed Hitler.)

By December 1941, when the Nazis were at the gates of Moscow, the Soviets had already suffered nine million casualties. They called on the Western Allies to open a Second Front in the West in 1942, but Churchill and Roosevelt stalled until they saw the Soviets might move through all of Europe and defeat the Nazis by themselves.

Yes, humanity owes a great deal to the heroic fighters of World War II, most of them led by communists.✪

WHAT WE FIGHT FOR

✪PLP fights to smash capitalism—wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world. The Soviet Union and China returned to capitalism because socialism maintained too many aspects of the profit system, like wages and divisions of labor.

✪Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism. This fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.

✪Communism means working collectively to build a society where sharing is based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money and profit. Everyone will share society's benefits and burdens.

✪Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.

✪Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.

✪Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✪Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers.

JOIN US!

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PLP'ers Expose Kerry At LA Anti-War March

LOS ANGELES, June 7 — On June 5, about 2,000 people marched through downtown here protesting the occupation of Iraq. While the march leaders were either ignoring the elections or just attacking Bush, Progressive Labor Party boldly attacked Kerry and the capitalist system.PL handed out thousands of leaflets titled, "Bush and Kerry: Two Faces of War and Fascism" and sold hundreds of CHALLENGES. Exposing Kerry led to many good discussions and even a few arguments.

Many at the march agreed that Kerry was as bad as Bush, but saw no alternative. We pointed out that the power to change society lies not with politicians but in the hands of workers, students, and soldiers

Many at the march agreed that Kerry was as bad as Bush, but saw no alternative. We pointed out that the power to change society lies not with politicians but in the hands of workers, students, and soldiers. We argued that an international revolutionary communist movement led by PLP was the only way to destroy war and fascism.

A man from a small South American country was excited to hear of a revolutionary communist party with an international outlook. Many others agreed with most of what we said, but are not yet won to see the possibility of a long-term struggle. Several people gave us their names. Others said they were glad we attacked Bush AND Kerry.

The marchers and workers who watched were much angrier than in past marches. Many on the sidewalks have relatives involved in the war. This anger shows that people need to hear our line. There is currently an opening for us in PLP to win these workers and students away from the cynicism of electoral politics and towards revolutionary communist ideas.

By either ignoring or favoring Kerry, the leaders of the march objectively support imperialism. PLP warns of the dangerous illusions of backing this capitalist politician who wants to send 40,000 more troops to the Mid-East and step up fascist "Homeland security." Anyone who believes a vote for Kerry means at least a "more progressive domestic agenda," is being deluded.

The imperialists cannot both expand their Mid-East war and simultaneously fund vital social services to make workers' lives better. The alternative of fighting to destroy capitalism and build communism is becoming more compelling.✪

No D-Day Without Red Army

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

the West for political reasons."

It agrees that, "Military historians have always known that the main scene of the Nazis' downfall was the Eastern Front, which claimed 80% of all German military casualties in the war.

"The four-year conflict between the Wehrmacht and the Red Army remains the largest and possibly the most ferocious ever fought….The front extended 1,900 miles (greater than the distance from the northern border of Maine to the southern tip of Florida) and German troops advanced over 1,000 miles into Soviet territory (equivalent to the distance from the East Coast to Topeka, Kansas). And they clashed in a seemingly unrelenting series of military operations of unparalleled scale; the battle of Kursk alone…involved 3.5 million men."

Of course, the bosses' media and U.S. textbooks never trace this monumental achievement of the Soviet working class and its Red Army to the leadership of the Communist Party and its leader Josef Stalin, a victory that almost single-handedly saved the world from Hitlerite fascism. (For a full analysis of WW2, see CHALLENGE supplement, May 17, 1995.)✪

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Red Leadership, Workers' Unity Key to Fighting New Racist Boss

CHICAGO, IL, June 7 — When our contract talks finally get started at Stroger Hospital, Daniel Winship will be the new head of the Cook County public-health system. While he was the CEO of the University of Missouri Health Care system (1999-2003), he wiped out close to 700 jobs and ordered pay cuts and hiring freezes to balance a $21.3 million budget deficit on the workers' backs. The University of Missouri System Spectrum Newsletter reported, "While the hospital is beginning to see some progress in reducing the deficit…[Winship] noted that indigent care continues to be a drain on resources." (2/28/02)

Public health, education and all social services are under attack based on the billions funding the war in Iraq, the fascist Homeland Security police state and Bush's tax cuts for billionaires.

Winship will assume the throne with a series of racist attacks on workers and patients while making $277,000 a year. His first job will be to force a racist war contract on us that cuts wages, jobs and our health care benefits. After that, he will focus his fire on the mostly black and Latin unemployed and uninsured men, women and children we serve.

Winship was hired by County boss Stroger, a black Democrat, whose bank accounts are fat with union money. So much for "lesser-evil" politicians who are "friends of labor." The whole capitalist system stinks.

THE KERRY CONVENTION

The SEIU Convention this month will focus on mobilizing more than a million members to get out the vote for John Kerry. Kerry supports the war in Iraq and wants to add 40,000 troops. He backs the Homeland Security police state and criticizes Bush for not going far enough. Charles Kupchan of the Council on Foreign Relations wrote, "Europeans are hoping that a Kerry administration would execute a 180-degree turn on foreign policy, it's more likely to be a 20% adjustment." (The Economist, 5/15)

John Sweeney, Andy Stern and the AFL-CIO leadership are committed to U.S. imperialism ruling the world. They fear the potential of angry black, Latin and women workers, concentrated in the major cities, with loved ones serving in the armed forces. They want this anger safely confined to the dead-end electoral process. They hold out the illusion that some millionaire politician will save us, while they negotiate away our jobs, wages, health care and living conditions. PLP will be at the convention to build the revolutionary movement among delegates from other locals and cities.

THE FIGHT OF OUR LIVES

Day after day grievances are piling up. About seven discharge cases have been heard, with no response from the bosses. Many others haven't even been heard yet.

One worker was written up recently for wearing cargo pants and violating the dress code! On another ward, two workers were having a personal conversation and a management spy phoned the supervisor to have one worker written up for using a curse word.

Through firings and harassment, by adding work to assignments and not upgrading classifications, management is trying to settle the new contract before the talks even start.

We are in a fight for our lives, no matter who gets elected. The recent struggle to save the jobs of the black respiratory therapists (see CHALLENGE, 4/28) is a glimpse of what can happen when workers unite and communist leadership begins to take hold.

We must prepare to strike in the fall. The best way to do that is to read and distribute CHALLENGE and join and build PLP. We will use this contract fight to try to beat back every racist attack and build the revolutionary communist movement. Our future is in our hands.✪

FLASH!

WASHINGTON, D.C. — CHALLENGE readers will recall that PLP'er Mike Golash received 1,900 votes for the presidency of Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 689 in December, finishing second. Since then, Mike has led a militant group of workers in opposing the pro-boss actions of Gabby Hicks, the union's sellout president. Now the International ATU has just ruled the Local must re-run the entire election due to irregularities in voting procedures. So the workers will have another chance to evaluate their union leadership and, through Mike's renewed campaign, PLP will sow more seeds for communist revolution! Stay tuned.✪

Marine Condemns War in Iraq

'WE'RE COMMITTING GENOCIDE....'

(*The following story is taken directly from an interview by reporter Paul Rockwell of the Sacramento Bee, May 16. It shows that there are many GIs who don't follow orders blindly as did the torturers in Abu Ghraib prison and reject the Nazi/racist view that Iraqis are "sub-human." Many are learning from their experience. Reportedly 1,700 have deserted or refused to go to Iraq.*)

For nearly 12 years, "Staff Sgt. Jimmy Massey was a hard-core, some say gung-ho, Marine." He trained fellow Marines in boot camp. "The Iraq war, the brutality, the sheer carnage of the U.S. invasion, touched his conscience and transformed him forever," writes Rockwell. He was honorably discharged and is back home in Waynsville, N.C. Massey was in the initial invasion and says, "We killed a lot of innocent people…. I was in charge of a platoon…of machine gunners and missile men….One particular incident — and there's many more — …really pushed me over the edge. It involved a car with Iraqi civilians. Intelligence reports [said the] cars were loaded down with suicide bombs."

Massey's platoon fired machine guns. "Every car that we lit up we were expecting ammunition to go off. Never heard any. One gentleman looked up at me and said: 'Why did you kill my brother? We didn't do anything wrong.' That hit me like a ton of bricks." Massey reports Baghdad was bombed with civilians trying to flee. He says the U.S. dropped leaflets: "Just throw up your hands, lay down weapons." They did but U.S. troops "were still lighting them up…. We never found any weapons." Massey says he helped throw bodies in a ditch. Outside Baghdad, "We lit up a rally after we heard a stray gunshot." The demonstrators….were young and…had no weapons….The order to shoot…, I believe, came from senior government officials, including intelligence communities within the military and the U.S. government." They fired "into six or ten kids. All taken out."

Massey raised his weapon toward one Iraqi hiding behind a concrete pillar. "He put up his hands. He ran off. I told everybody, 'Don't shoot.' He was running with half of his foot cut off…." Massey says, "Depleted uranium [DU] is everywhere on the battlefield. If you hit a tank, there's dust. American tanks have depleted uranium on the sides, and the projectiles have DU in them. If an enemy vehicle gets hit, the area gets contaminated. Dead rounds are in the ground. It's basically like leaving plutonium rods around.

"I'm 32 years old. I have 80% of my lung capacity. I ache all the time. I don't feel like a healthy 32-year-old. DU is affecting our troops [and] Iraqi civilians…. "The civilian populace is just now starting to learn about it. Hell, I didn't even know about DU until two years ago….I read an article in Rolling Stone magazine!" "I had one of my Marines in my battalion who lost his leg from….a multi-purpose cluster bomb…. He stepped on it. We didn't get to training about clusters until about a month before I left…. They were everywhere, inside the towns and cities….Once the round leaves the tube, the cluster bomb has a mind of its own."

Massey hears from Marine buddies inside that, "There were 200-something civilians killed in Fallujah. The military is scrambling…to keep the wraps on that. My understanding is Fallujah is just littered with civilian bodies." Massey reports that after killing innocent Iraqis in cars pushed him "over the edge," his commanding officer asked, "Are you OK?" Massey replied, "No, today is not a good day. We killed a bunch of civilians." The officer "corrected" him: "No, today was a good day." When he said that, Massey thought, "What the hell am I into?" Massey says that, "Before the invasion…. My president told me they got weapons of mass destruction, that Saddam threatened the free world, that [he]… could reach us anywhere. I just bought into the whole thing."

"I killed innocent people for our government," Massey admits. "Where is the good coming out of it? I feel like I've had a hand in some sort of evil lie at the hands of our government. I just feel…ashamed." After Baghdad fell, Massey's platoon went south to Karbala. "We had a…meeting on the battle plan…. Things were going through my head — about what we were doing over there. Things my troops were asking. I was holding it all inside…." He told his lieutenant, "'You know, I honestly feel that what we're doing is wrong over here. We're committing genocide….with the killing of civilians and the depleted uranium we're leaving over here.' He didn't like that. He…stormed off. I knew right then…my career was over…."After I talked to the top commander….I was basically put on house arrest…. "

Massey concluded, "It was just a personal conviction with me. I've had an impeccable career. I chose to get out….. I blame the president of the U.S. It's not the grunt….The president…said they had weapons of mass destruction. It was a lie."✪

Wounded Women GI Regrets U.S. Role in Iraq

Danielle Green, 27, a former star basketball player for Notre Dame, has just returned from Iraq without her left hand. It was ripped off by a rocket from a homemade missile launcher. Interviewed by the New York Times (6/3), she said she had been "disappointed" in her tour of duty in Iraq. "I thought we were going for humanitarian reasons, like building things and cleaning the neighborhoods up….But we hardly did any of it. We spent a lot of time just doing nothing.

"Looking back, I personally don't think we should have gone into Iraq. Not the way things have turned out. A lot more people are going to get hurt, and for what?"

As with many others, this black soldier joined the army "inspired not by patriotism" but, she says, "I thought I could develop greater discipline and organization if I did."

She said, "I grew up very poor on the South and West Sides of Chicago…. And my father wasn't around at all, and my mother got messed up with drugs. And I remember as a small child loving G.I. Joe. I thought, 'Oh, man, that's cool.'"

She grew up with an aunt who was also hooked on drugs and then lived with her grandmother. She said there was "a lot of chaos" in her early life and the military seemed to offer order.✪

Draft Is Coming; Organize GI's to Fight Warmakers

A military draft is on the way, and involuntary conscription is already here.

Twin bills in the House and Senate, HR 163 and S 89, are timed to pass just after this year's presidential election and begin as early as June 15, 2005. This draft will bar blanket college deferments and escape to Canada, as in the Vietnam War.

The Universal National Service Act of 2003, backed by both Bush and Kerry, will "require that all young persons [age 18 to 26] …including women, perform…military…or civilian service in furtherance of the national defense and homeland security and for other purposes." These active bills currently sit in the committees on armed services in the Senate and House.

College deferments will be limited to seniors finishing their academic year and the lower years to finishing their current semester.

In December 2001, Canada and the U.S. signed a "smart border declaration," a 30-point plan requiring a "pre-clearance agreement" for people entering and departing each country, to prevent "draft dodgers."

The 2004 Selective Service System budget has already received $28 million to prepare for a military draft. The Pentagon is quietly campaigning to fill all 10,350 draft board positions and 11,070 appeals board slots nationwide. Though unpopular in an election year, given the rulers' declaration of a "permanent state of war on terrorism," such a draft becomes their best option to stock U.S. military bases in 132 countries, to say nothing of the endless wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and beyond, to secure U.S. control of Mid-East oil. And performing military service "for other purposes" is easily usable as a catch-all to quell strikes and rebellions at home.

THE CURRENT DRAFT

Shortly after 9/11 Bush authorized a "stop-loss" policy that "allows commanders to hold soldiers past the date they are due to leave the service if their unit is scheduled to be deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan." (Op-ed column by former Army captain Andrew Exum, N. Y. Times, 6/2) This "prevents a mass exodus of combat soldiers."

"For enlisted soldiers…who sign on…for a predetermined period of service," says Exum, "stop-loss is a gross breach of contract." These are volunteers who are "already veterans of several tours in Iraq and Afghanistan" who "have completed their active duty obligations" but are now being "conscripted" involuntarily to serve beyond the period for which they volunteered. In effect, the government "stop-loss" policy is drafting them.

Added to this current "draft" is activating members of "the individual Ready Reserve as part of what [the military] is calling an 'involuntary mobilization.'" These are troops released from active duty and "who are no longer expected to participate even in regular training." (NYT)

These involuntary conscripts will provide the 20,000 additional troops the Pentagon has slated for Iraq or the 40,000 Kerry has called for. Given the unpopularity of a "regular" draft amid a presidential campaign, they will, Exum says, become "election-year fodder."

Additionally, the racist "economic draft" forces mainly black, Latin and Asian, but also white working-class youth to join the military for lack of decent civilian jobs.

Many of these soldiers are beginning to realize that the lies and patriotism pushed by the rulers just mean dying and killing other workers to protect the megaprofits of Exxon-Mobil, Halliburton, Chase, Citibank, & Co. This provides great potential to organize among these soldiers (and the regular draft will multiply this potential) to oppose the imperialist warmakers and fight for the only solution to a future of endless wars, racist/fascist terror, mass unemployment and minimum-wage jobs: communism.✪

Homecare Workers Lead Fight Against Racist Exploitation

NEW YORK CITY—"We are going to be on strike on June 7, please support us." "We care for Alzheimer's patients, old people and disabled people. Our clients depend on us. We can't leave them at any time."

"Many of us work 12 hours a day, at $6 to 8 an hour with no overtime pay. Many of us work 24 hours [including sleeping in], often 10 days at a stretch. We're paid for 12 hours at straight pay, sometimes with a night differential of $17, sometimes with nothing."

"On the first May Day in 1886 workers fought for the 8-hour day. On this May Day in 2004 we're fighting for the 8-hour day with overtime pay!" So reported home attendants and home health aides at a May Day event in New York City.

About 125,000 homecare workers belong to 1199-SEIU here. Thousands more are not unionized. Nearly 40% of these homecare workers, mostly immigrant women, used to work in factories that have since outsourced their jobs to free enterprise zones around the world. We must unite with our brothers and sisters to fight capitalism's low wages worldwide.

The 1199 union contracts state what homecare workers can't earn, like time for travel between jobs and certification training time. They don't mention the duration of the work-week, overtime rates or working 24 hours. The union leaders are complicit in the robbery of these workers.

Local 1199 is concentrating on the $10 "living wage" for 23,000 home health aides in NYC and registering its members to vote. Gifford Miller, chairperson of the NY City Council, told a union rally in April, "Higher wages means higher taxes and better services." While home health aides may see only half of their sought-for $3 wage hike after increased taxes, one can bet the taxes will finance war, not services for the working class.

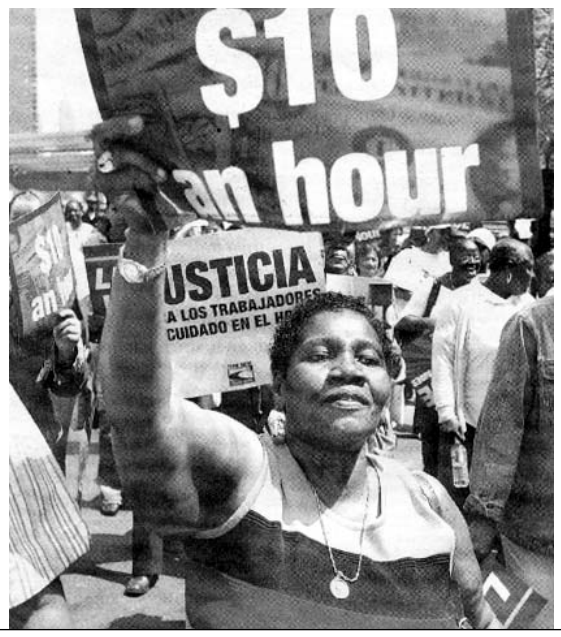
The U.S. government spends $4-5 billion monthly on the imperialist oil war in Iraq, profiting the oil and banking billionaires. Meanwhile, workers are sped up and education, housing subsidy and healthcare budgets are cut — and 35 million people in the U.S. live below the poverty line.

Summer Project 2004

"Don't leave me out of the summer plan," said one worker after May Day. Seventeen homecare workers, current and former students in 1199 ESL classes and their teacher are organizing a PLP-led Summer Project. We began with a planning meeting and then, together with a church group, picketed the offices of New York's Democratic senators, Clinton and Schumer. We will also: picket a local Bronx Democratic Assemblyman's office and a homecare agency; take the case of one worker seeking overtime pay for her 18 years on the job to the NY State Dept. of Labor; leaflet two large hospitals, demanding equality with hospital workers; join protests at the Republican Convention in August; support the strike by home health aides; and take a bus trip to a state park with our families.

Throughout the summer we will hold regular PLP study groups, discussing the Party and articles in CHALENGE-DESAFIO, aiming to increase the network distribution of the paper from its current 26 to as much as we can.

As more workers realize that as long as capitalism exists we will suffer endless poverty and imperialist wars, wage slavery and racist brutality — all in the name of "democracy and homeland security" — they can be won to become revolutionary organizers, giving leadership to other workers and to PLP. These workers, mostly women and minorities, can help the entire working class fight for a society without bosses. Learning from the achievements and errors of our revolutionary ancestors, we will hasten the day for workers' power: communism.✪



Some striking homecare workers won a $3 an hour increase, bringing them up to $10 by 2007, still leaving them below the poverty line. Union leaders were booed when they told the remaining strikers the walkout would end after three days.

Chicago's Racist School Cuts: No War Left Behind

CHICAGO, June 9 - The Board of Education is closing 10 schools and cutting 1,600 jobs, including 400 staff for early childhood programs and special education classes, plus 180 central office workers. This ties into the capitalist agenda of imperialist war, fascism, police terror and low wages.

Eighty-six percent of Chicago's predominately black and Latin students live in poverty and are being "left behind." Fancy new magnet schools are built to lure the middle class back into the city while staff is cut in places of severe need.

In May, no slate running in the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) elections received 50% of the vote, leading to a June 11 run-off. Neither the incumbent "reformer" Debbie Lynch of the PACT caucus, nor her opponent representing the "old guard" ousted three years ago, will fight the cuts. These pro-capitalist union leaders put the bosses' agenda over a decent education for working-class children.

To remain the top imperialist power, U.S. capitalists need many scientists, doctors, teachers and other professions. They also need students to be patriotic, racist and willing to fight imperialist wars. The capitalists need the teachers unions on their side. That's why the head of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) sits on the bosses' Council on Foreign Relations. The AFT has served the rulers well for years, taking pro-war, anti-student positions. None of the CTU candidates challenged this role. The Lynch leadership "responded" to the latest cutbacks by distributing "No Staff Cuts" signs and stickers and demonstrating at the Board meeting.

Our modest PLP forces in the schools and the CTU are working to win over teachers and students and popularize our ideas. A teachers' CHALLENGE study group meets regularly and dozens of union members read CHALLENGE. Several students went to May Day because of involvement in a discussion group about racism and war. As we develop more influence among teachers and students, we can take on both the School Board and the CTU leadership, organizing strikes and protests of parents, students, teachers and other school staff against racist cuts that finance imperialist wars. By fighting the bosses and building the PLP, we will learn what it takes to wage the ultimate fight for communist revolution.✪

HIT RUTGERS COMMUNITY POLICING/ 'COUNTER-TERRORISM' GANG-UP

NEWARK, NJ, June 4 — Chanting, "They say Patriot Act; we say fight back," and "1-2-3-4, we won't fight your oil war; 5-6-7-8, we don't want your fascist state," workers and students from this area picketed a conference on "Economic, Social, and Legal Consequences of Heightened Security" at the Rutgers-Newark (R-N) Center for Law & Justice. The demonstration was organized on short notice, and involved members of several mass organizations active around issues of racism, police brutality and the war in Iraq. A PLP flyer was distributed hand-to-hand to help bring friends to this action.

The flyer said that under capitalism educational institutions are not neutral in the class struggle. Despite their pretense of protecting academic freedom for all, the capitalists use their control of society — which includes the universities — to push their agenda. During capitalist crises, they mobilize the population to support fascism and the bosses' wars for control of oil.

Our suspicions that Rutgers' Prof. George Kelling's bloody hands were somehow involved proved true. The conference accompanied an R-N "domestic security preparedness conference" sponsored by, among others, the R-N Police Institute (PI) and the Manhattan Institute (MI). The PI has been Kelling's vehicle for pushing his "community policing" plans; the MI has been the main right-wing think-tank helping to spread it across the U.S.

Kelling's success with community policing — using workers to aid the cops in fingering other workers and youth — has apparently made him a key player in ruling-class plans for a national security police state in the U.S. In late 2002, Kelling — author of "Broken Windows" — and the MI started the Counterterrorism Information Sharing Consortium to integrate local cops into the Feds' "war against terrorism."

To add insult to injury, Viet Dinh, co-author of the U.S.A. Patriot Act and now law school professor at Georgetown, was to give the afternoon keynote. Dinh, a vicious anti-communist, openly justifies the mass round-ups and jailings of South Asian and other immigrants after 9/11.

The morning panelists came from the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, the shipping industry and the Federal Reserve. Obviously this conference was called to map ruling-class plans for imposing Homeland Security throughout the U.S. The use of the liberal Rutgers Law School to help build a U.S. police state was a wake-up call.

Speakers from several of the mass organizations eloquently exposed U.S. rulers' plans for more imperialist war and full-blown fascism, and called for immediate action to fight back. One speaker from a local anti-police brutality group declared, "It's not coming; it's here." Others attacked Kelling's racist ideas — jailing thousands of black and Latin youth under the guise of promoting "quality of life." Another said, "Imperialist war and police brutality are quality-of-life crimes." A third speaker explained to bystanders listening intently why the biggest terrorists are those promoting government policies which intensify the bosses' police state. During the speeches, many CHALLENGES and flyers were distributed.

Although Dinh canceled his speech at the last minute, we should have no illusions. We must redouble our efforts to recruit to the Party, amid building a mass movement against war and fascism. Our opportunities seem to be increasing. As we turn our sights to the upcoming conventions in Boston and New York, we must steel our determination.✪

NEW T-SHIRT!

Put forward a revolutionary line this summer at the Democratic and Republican Conventions with Progressive Labor Party's White T-Shirt that reads:

REVOLT! DON'T VOTE

SIZES: M, L, XLAvailable June 2nd.
Send $10 (Check or Money Order to:
CHALLENGE PERIODICALS
PO Box 808
Brooklyn, NY 11202

LETTERS

Our Responsibility to Our Children

My daughter was a five-month embryo in my abdomen when we marched out of Central Park into a long line of police on horseback in the first big Manhattan demonstration against the Vietnam War under the PL banner, "U.S. Out of Vietnam!"

During the late 1960s and early 1970s I regularly sold CHALLENGE in our Manhattan neighborhood with my toddler daughter by my side. She was a regular "participant" in many PL and anti-Vietnam War meetings at my home and even in offices of my union, sleeping on a pillow on the floor or on my lap as we worked late into the night. She walked the picket line with me — arousing complaints from management (to the rousing laughter of fellow strikers) that we were "exploiting" our own children.

But as the years have passed, I stopped selling CHALLENGE openly and my own participation in mass activities for the Party slackened — thought my conviction about the correctness of its principles never wavered. But I am most critical that I never tried to actively recruit my own daughter to the Party.

The reason, I admit with shame, was fear. Fear for her safety. At one point I even thought of taking a furlough from the Party because I began to fear that I might lose my job and, as a single parent, was completely responsible for her welfare. I should have realized what an opportunity I was letting slip by when she expressed clear distress that I would "give up my ideals" even though she was then about 10 years old and we had not seriously discussed communist politics. She was clearly responding positively to an engaged way of life — and I didn't take that furlough.

She is now a wonderfully strong and clear-minded woman in her mid-30s who leads a virtuous life — but not a communist one. Occasionally she initiates a discussion with me to ask in a serious, not aversive way why I continued in my beliefs even though communism seems to have collapsed around the world. Of course, that is the question all of us as comrades have to deal with nowadays in building a base among our friends and fellow workers.

All this is a prelude to saying that I think CHALLENGE'S May Day issue — with its inspiring articles on demonstrations around the world and the historical information on capitalist torture and the 1918 insurrection in Strasbourg — was great! And today, after all these years, I'm giving a copy to my daughter. And we will talk.

A MANHATTAN COMRADE

Tie India Election To Imperialist Rivalry

The article on India (CHALLENGE, 6/9) missed an important aspect of the recent elections there: the link to the inter-imperialist rivalry unfolding in Iraq and Afghanistan. The defeated right-wing government led by the BJP Party was planning a sort of coup, retiring the old Prime Minister Bajpayi and forging a strong Israel-India-U.S. axis to share the oil flow from the Mid-East. The BJP had intended to send thousands of Indian troops to Iraq. It's doubtful the new government led by the Congress Party will do that. They repeatedly call for a strong multi-polar world and advocate close relations with the European imperialists, with Russia and China as well as the U.S.

Sonia Gandhi's refusal to accept the Prime Minister post is mostly cosmetic, not due to the threat on her life. Mainly, the Indian bosses want to gain maximum advantage from the U.S. Iraq disaster.

The right-wing BJP was willing to gamble with the Bush gang. The Congress Party will play hardball with the U.S. They have five decades of experience as well as the backing of the two main revisionist [phony left] "Communist" Parties.

A READER

Genocide at the Haitian-Dominican Border

Like many Dominican and Haitian immigrants in the U.S., I donated food for the victims of the terrible flood that killed thousands. No one knows how many were buried by the mud or rising water. Working-class solidarity always shines when fellow workers are hit by such tragedies, even though many know that much of the aid usually fills the pockets of crooked officials.

But while the flood was a natural disaster, the slaughter wasn't. David Alvarez Martín wrote an article in the Dominican daily El Caribe (6/1) entitled "Genocide in Jimaní." He explained that the only reason so many people were buried alive was the government's failure to provide them with decent places to live. Many are trapped in miserable conditions near the river. He accused corrupt government officials of enriching themselves at the expense of these people.

In 2003, the ousted President Hipólito Mejía used over $2 billions to bail out the Bainter bank, which engineered an Enron-type fraud. Money went to the big investors, not to the little people who lost their savings. There are even reports that INDRHI, the state water resources agency, was drilling for a dam nearby (despite experts' advice against it), worsening the flood.

On the Haitian side, the U.S.-French lackey running the country after Aristide was ousted, blamed the tragedy on deforestation, on people tearing down trees for use as cooking fuel. But many profit-driven international companies have uprooted the valuable Gaiac tree, a hardwood that doesn't absorb water so it can be used for pier pilings. Without replacing those trees, the ground is open to flooding, which contributed to the tragedy.

The Haitian bosses and the imperialists are responsible for the rotten conditions that have made the country a disaster area, with or without floods. Those who believed that the new rulers, who, with the help of the Tonton Macoute death squads ousted Aristide, will change things are now realizing the sad truth. Aristide himself became corrupt and betrayed the poor masses who viewed him as a savior. Corruption, drug gangs and imperialist super-exploitation will continue.

Don't expect too much either from the newly-elected Dominican President, Leonel Fernández. His main job is serving capitalism and the International Monetary Fund.

Indeed, as CHALLENGE has been saying, world capitalism has brought the international working class to a new Dark Age. The only light at the end of this tunnel is to organize a movement to destroy all the bosses, and bury them once and for all. Join the PLP now!

RED IMMIGRANT

Laundromat Bosses Soak Women Workers

A recent N.Y. Times article described the terrible conditions suffered by NYC laundromat workers (almost all women, many of them Mexican immigrants) who fold clothes for 80 to 90 hours a week at $3 an hour or less.

A friend of mine who used to do that work left because of the low pay and rotten conditions — many women faint because of the heat from the dryers — and because, as a single mother, she had no time to take care of her children. But her sister still works in a laundromat.

She said her sister and co-workers are denied lunch-breaks, despite those long hours. When she asked her boss (most owners are immigrants too) for a raise of $6 a day — just a few pennies an hour, and still virtually only half the already miserable minimum wage — he refused. If she misses a day or a few hours, the boss threatens to fire her. She, like all the other women doing that work, has no papers. The racist anti-immigrant policies are deadly for thousands of these workers, while providing super-profits for the few immigrant bosses who own the laundromats.

Some women are beginning to organize and want to build a union, but given the long record of betrayals by today's union hacks, the future is not bright.

On the other hand, if we can win some of these women to PLP, they can organize their co-workers to see that capitalism always finds a zillion ways to make life a living hell for workers worldwide, and that the best solution is to join our Party and wash the capitalist filth from the face of the earth. Join the PLP and fight for a society without racism and wage slavery.

A NYC COMRADE

U.S. Military Can't - or Won't - Feed GI's

A Marine now in Iraq outside Falluja, told his wife he and his buddies were going hungry. In April when supply routes running north from Kuwait were under frequent attack, the brass cut the number of truck convoys making that trip. Consequently, the Marines outside Falluja received one MRE (Meal Ready to Eat) per day — for each TWO Marines. An MRE is intended for one soldier. It contains about 1,200 calories. At least two per day are needed to sustain one soldier under battlefield conditions — so they were getting about ONE-FOURTH of that minimum.

If the brass had diverted a few helicopters from other missions, they could have brought more food to the Marines despite the attacks on truck convoys. But the brass could care less about Marines being hungry for a few days or weeks.[Not to mentinon the thousands of starving Iraqi children and civilians — Ed]

The Marine's wife heard from a friend whose spouse is in the Navy, stationed in the Middle East, that he and his fellow sailors were told they had to buy their own food when they were off duty. The sailors protested and received a per-diem food allowance from the Navy.

Lots of little things are combining to tell U.S. troops that the war in Iraq is not for "freedom" and "democracy," but only serves U.S. imperialism. Little things can lead to big things. In 1905, during the Russo-Japanese War, rotten food on the Imperial Battleship Potemkin triggered a mutiny that united with workers in the port of Odessa and led to opposition to the whole imperialist war.

A FRIEND

Nationalist Alliance Deadly For Workers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

poor people on the continent, because of capitalism and imperialism. Lula warned that these conditions are a powderkeg for violence. His real worry is workers' mass violence against their exploiters. Communists welcome this, knowing well that class struggle is the engine moving history forward.

Mexico's Vincente Fox has been one Bush's most loyal servants in Latin America. Fox even recalled his ambassador to Cuba. But now he tried to change his image as Bush's lapdog by re-establishing relations with Havana.

The "altermundistas" (mass organizations against the summit) opposed economic deals based on neo-liberalism's free market. This line mirrors nationalists like Chavez and Lula. But even so, during the Summit the Gualajara cops attacked them brutally. No wonder Fox and other Latin American rulers don't condemn Bush for "torture." They're experts at torturing their own people.

Castro refused to attend, criticizing EU rulers as hypocrites who attacked human rights violations in Cuba but not in Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison or the brutality suffered by Latin American and African immigrants. Yet this hasn't stopped Castro from accepting European, Canadian, Mexican and other capitalist investments to exploit Cuban workers. Castro hypocritically uses "anti-imperialist" rhetoric when it's convenient, deceiving many honest people.

No form of capitalism or imperialism can free workers from a system which only offers endless wars, mass unemployment, racism, hunger and poverty. Communists must redouble our efforts to offer the world's workers and their allies the only solution to this hell. We in PLP are dedicated to rebuilding this international communist movement.✪

Visteon Workers Battle Strike-breaking Cops

BEDFORD, INDIANA, June 1—Two-dozen state troopers with riot helmets and shields reinforced strike-breaking security guards at a Visteon auto parts plant today, after striking workers clashed with the security guards and scabs. Visteon and Local 907 of the International Union of Electrical Workers-Communications Workers of America reached a tentative contract agreement on May 23, but the workers rejected it, and the strike began early on May 30.

The plant makes parts for fuel systems and for windshield wipers and drive trains. Last April, Visteon announced it was ending production of fuel delivery modules here, eliminating 600 of the 1,150 jobs.

Twelve strikers were injured blocking a driveway to stop a van full of scabs. At least two strikers were knocked to the ground.

One striker said, "When the van tried to leave, their security guards came out and they were hitting people…I got shoved in front of the van, my legs were pulled under and I was hanging onto the wiper arm."

The company accused strikers of blocking entrances, throwing nails down to puncture tires, and hitting vehicles carrying scabs into the plant.

The world's largest corporations will spare no expense and use the full weight of their state, cops and courts, to brutally drive down workers' living conditions in this period of expanding war and Homeland Security fascism. A mass rally of 100,000 auto, steel, and other IUE and CWA members in Indiana, surrounding the plant, could sharpen the struggle for a decent contract and up the ante in the battle against the private thugs and state police. But the union leaders are committed to helping the bosses cut labor costs, while telling the workers to elect Kerry. Voting for some bosses' politician will not reverse this tidal wave of attacks. Only the patient and urgent building of a mass PLP in basic industry can provide the revolutionary answer this assault needs.✪

MICHAEL MOORE'S MOVIE BASHES BUSH BUT AIDS LIBERAL WARMAKERS

Self- proclaimed "anti-capitalist" filmmaker Michael Moore says his "Fahrenheit 9/11" does such a number on George Bush that Hollywood bosses won't touch it with a ten-foot pole. Moore claims he had to wage a titanic battle to wrest control of the film from evil Disney moguls, who refused to show it. According to Moore, only through the intercession of the anti-Hollywood Weinstein brothers has the film found an independent distributor. But this David-and-Goliath hype strays far from reality.

"Fahrenheit's" chief promoters represent the dominant, liberal wing of U.S. rulers, whom Moore helps by criticizing Bush's failures before and after Sept. 11 and his bungling of the Iraq invasion. The liberals need a president more effective than Bush at establishing a police state in the U.S. and rallying forces for the imperialist wars necessary to maintain U.S. world domination.

Reviewers say "Fahrenheit," due out in late June, exposes incompetence and corruption in the Bush White House. That sounds good at first. But look who's backing Moore. The "Independent" Film Channel (IFC), wholly owned by Cablevision, is distributing the movie in the U.S. Once a family-owned, third-rate media outlet, Cablevision has fallen into the hands of the major rulers. Two years ago, when, in order to compete, Cablevision began borrowing more than $1.5 billion from banks like JP Morgan and Citigroup, the big boys took over. In a classic case of the rulers' exercising control through finance capital, JP Morgan Chase became the company's financial advisor. The rulers put an ex-JP Morgan managing director, Thomas Reifenheiser, and a U.S. Navy admiral, John Ryan, on Cablevision's board, to ensure the firm's imperialist orientation. A major figure in the U.S. killing machine, Ryan has headed both the Sixth Fleet and the Naval Academy. The warmakers putting "Fahrenheit" on movie screens want Bush to ship out if, as it seems, he can't shape up.

Another of Moore's pals is former Democratic Senator George Mitchell, Disney's chairman of the board. Mitchell's Disney helped rather than hindered the U.S. release of "Fahrenheit." Owning the film's rights, Disney could have locked it in a safe and thrown away the key. Instead Disney let the Weinsteins buy it and pass it along to IFC. Disney then blessed the deal by saying that any profits it made would go to charity.

Mitchell's favorite cause is U.S. imperialism. A former Clinton envoy, Mitchell sits on the board of directors of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), a liberal strategy-making think-tank. The CFR, closely tied to the Exxon Mobil-JP Morgan Chase-Rockefeller wing of U.S. capital, had long called for an invasion of Iraq, demonizing Hussein's regime as the "greatest danger on earth." The CFR, however, wanted Bush to delay the attack until he could gather larger U.S. forces and more allies. The main rulers' criticism of Bush, which Moore fosters, is that his assault on Iraq was not deadly enough.

Moore knows not to bite the hand that feeds him. While he dwells on Bush's well-known ties to the oil industry, he ignores liberal war profiteers. Piper Rudnick, a law firm Mitchell also heads, now specializes in advising client companies on cashing in on Iraqi reconstruction. And Moore has nothing but praise for his saviors, the Weinsteins, who are major funders of John Kerry's campaign. Kerry has plans for militarizing the U.S. that Bush never dreamed of.

Moore may once have had pro-working class leanings. His "Roger and Me" showed sympathy for unemployed workers in Flint, Michigan, and bitterness toward GM bosses. But even that film offered the false hope that capitalism could be reformed by "more public-spirited" executives. Now Moore offers the equally deadly promise that dumping Bush for Kerry can alleviate terrorism and war. Dumping the profit system through communist revolution is the only real solution. Moore steers people away from it by promoting illusions about supposedly "lesser evil" bosses. Our Party will continue to expose these fatal illusions and those who foster them.✪

RED EYE ON THE NEWS

BELOW ARE EXCERPTS FROM MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPERS THAT CONTAIN IMPORTANT INFORMATION:Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly (UK)

Peacekeepers fuel sex biz

Western troops, policemen, and civilians are largely to blame for the rapid growth of the sex slave industry in Kosovo over the past five years, a mushrooming trade in which hundreds of women, many of them under-age girls, are tortured, raped, abused, then criminalized. Amnesty International said last week…. The international presence in Kosovo continues to generate 80% of the income for the pimps, brothel girls or traffic women….The sex slavery in Kosovo parallels similar developments in Bosnia, where the arrival of thousands of Nato peacekeepers in 1995 fuelled a thriving forced prostitution industry.

International personnel in Kosovo enjoy immunity from prosecution… (GW, 5/13)

Langston Hughes vs. Kerry

Mr. Kerry has begun consistently wrapping up his speeches with…"Let America be America again."

It is the title of a 1938 poem by Langston Hughes…. [which reads] "O, let my land be a land where Liberty/Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath."….Mr. Kerry quoted, though he skipped…Hughes's bitter aside on racism:

(There's never been equality
for me,
Nor freedom in this
"homeland of the free") ….

For that matter,…. some ….would appreciate its declaration that "From those who live like leeches on the people's lives, /We must take back our land." (NYT, (6/1)

China: Capitalism = no job

China's embrace of capitalism is the reason it has become a manufacturing hub and one of the growth engines of the world economy. Yet it is also why employment is such an intractable problem. The transition from a planned economy to a market economy cost tens of millions of workers their jobs…. Some experts estimate that as many as 200 million people in the countryside are without work. (NYT, 5/28)

Digital speed-up = bad life

In the last 30 years, productivity has soared, but job satisfaction has plummeted….

The 1970's were a slower age, and much of the workers' pleasure in their jobs is related to the less-demanding time clock. A hospital billing agent can take time off from dunning patients to look in on a man whose leg was amputated, who has no one to care for him….

Three decades later, we are caught up in what a recent book dubbed "The Ruthless Economy." High tech and new management styles put workers on what the author Simon Head calls "digital assembly lines" with little room for creativity or independent thought….

There have been substantial productivity gains. But those gains have not found their way to paychecks. (NYT, 5/31)

Low-wage era won't end

Globalization…is also demonstrating the relevance of the 19th century economist David Ricardo's iron law of wages.

That "law" says that in a market in which the supply of labor is infinite — and for practical purposes, that is the case in today's globalized labor market — wages will eventually stabilize at a point just above subsistence level. (Tribune Media Service)

1954, People's War Defeated French Colonialism

May 7, 2004 marked the 50th anniversary of a battle that ranks among the greatest triumphs in working-class history. On that date in 1954, Vietnamese communist forces led by General Giap smashed the French army at its camp in Dien Bien Phu. The defeat sounded the death-knell of French and British colonialism. Although the French were to begin another bloody colonial war in Algeria that same year, Dien Bien Phu sealed the fate of colonialism, as it was known then.

The British novelist Graham Greene called this battle "a defeat for more than the French army. The defeat marked virtually the end of any hope the Western Powers might have entertained that they could dominate the East." ("Ways of Escape," p. 85)

The stakes for the U.S., British and French bosses, the major imperialist powers in 1954, were so high in this struggle that when the Eisenhower administration saw the handwriting on the wall for the French, it "discussed a whole range of military options — including carrier based air-delivered 'tactical' atomic bombs to relieve the siege of Dien Bien Phu." (George McT. Kahin, "Intervention: How American Became Involved in Vietnam," p. 46)

The French had an army of trained officers with the military hardware of a modern industrial capitalist society. The Vietnamese forces, called the Vietminh, were peasants with none of the equipment necessary for modern warfare. But as one of their fiercest opponents at Dien Bien Phu later observed:

I saw them start out with haphazard weapons, such as hunting guns, and then from month to month they were able to get organized to go from small groups to sections, and from sections to companies. And then on to battalions and brigades and finally to full divisions. (Lieutenant Colonel "Bruno" Bigeard, quoted in Michael Maclear, "The Ten-Thousand Day War," p.46).

The "secret" weapon that enabled the Vietminh to achieve this stunning victory is called "People's War." Inspired in great part by communist ideology, People's War enlisted the overwhelming majority of the Vietnamese population in the struggle against French colonialism. The armed struggle formed the major, but by no means the only component of this concept. The entire infrastructure of communications, transport, supply (including food) and medical care was built and maintained by the people. The French groaned bitterly that they could never distinguish combatants from non-combatants. The U.S. military would subsequently echo this complaint.

Ho Chi Minh and General Giap map battle plans.

General Giap had carefully studied the revolutionary concept of People's War through the experience of the Chinese Red Army, which had earlier smashed the Japanese fascist military and then the U.S.-backed forces of Chiang Kai-shek. Led by Mao Zedong, the Red Army embodied the principle that its soldiers should "be among the people like fish in water."

Mao and Giap applied the communist concept that the human element plays the key role in warfare. In this particular situation, the idea meant that the political motivation of those fighting — and of those who support the fighters — has qualitatively greater importance than the hardware belonging to the other side.

Lieutenant-Colonel Bigeard acknowledged the political superiority of the Vietminh:

> …I can tell you that they became the greatest infantry in the world: these enduring men [Bigeard couldn't bring himself to credit the many women fighters in the Vietminh — Ed.], capable of covering fifty kilometers in the night on the strength of a bowl of rice, with running shoes, and then singing their way into battle. In my opinion they turned out to be exceptional infantry and they managed to defeat us. Now, we were not that many, we were far from France, but we have to admit they also beat the Americans. So they were exceptional. (Maclear, p. 46)

The French defeat produced a reaction in Washington that somewhat resembles the U.S. bosses' current tactical squabbles about Bush, Jr.'s invasion of Iraq. The Eisenhower administration debated a number of alternatives but agreed unanimously that Vietnam could not "fall to communism." The Kennedy White House planned the first stages of U.S. intervention. After Kennedy's assassination, Lyndon Johnson & Co. concocted a series of lies that served as a pretext for escalating the war.

At the height of the Vietnam War, nearly 600,000 U.S. military personnel were stationed in Southeast Asia. Fifty-eight thousand U.S. troops died. By 1974, the U.S. War Dept. reported 503,926 deserted. (N.Y. Times, 8/20/74) Mutinies and the killing of officers by working-class GIs — called "fragging" — were common. Anti-war demonstrations and strikes engulfed U.S. colleges and high schools. Three million Vietnamese soldiers and civilians perished because of the genocidal tactics employed by the U.S.

But the U.S. imperialists' terror fell flat on its face. By 1974, the U.S. had to acknowledge the greatest military defeat in its history and to leave Vietnam with its tail between its legs, just as the French had 20 years earlier.

People's War had won a significant partial victory. But as the deplorable state of contemporary Vietnam demonstrates, capitalism has returned there with a vengeance. As PLP predicted at the time, bad politics turned this stunning working-class victory into a defeat of equal if not greater magnitude. The bad politics were the heritage of the old communist movement's errors, primarily nationalism, the deadly illusion that a Vietnamese capitalist is a lesser evil than a French or American capitalist. The Vietnamese Communist Party allowed itself to be infected with this poison. The infection led to a second fatal mistake: an alliance with the former Soviet Union, which, by the 1950s, had become a capitalist state with imperialist ambitions to rival the U.S. for world domination. Hoodwinked by the notion, "my enemy's enemy must be my friend," the Vietnamese took aid from the Soviets. This aid was intended to influence rather than help them, and the Vietnamese military's dependence on it led them to negotiate a settlement with the U.S., when the correct solution would have been a continuation of People's War.

Had People's War continued in Vietnam, it could have spread throughout the rest of Asia. It could have influenced the left forces in the Chinese Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. It could have given left leadership worldwide, including to black rebellions in the U.S., and inspired a wave of revolutionary struggle. But all this is hindsight, and given the old communist movement's capitulation to nationalism, the better-case scenario wasn't in the cards.

Nonetheless, PLP did grow in this period, and became politically stronger by learning from the achievements and errors of the Vietnamese and China's Red Guards, but we were unable to counter the move to the right. Still, we commemorate the heroism of the peasant army that crushed French colonialism 50 years ago. We can absorb these lessons of our class's most stirring victories and devastating defeats. This exercise, along with daily participation in class battles and the war over ideas, can help get us to the next level. This means fighting first, foremost, and exclusively for communism and consigning nationalist thinking to the garbage-dump of history.

The French defeat at Dien Bien Phu led to the U.S. invasion of Vietnam. Bush, Sr.'s Iraq I led to Bush, Jr.'s Iraq II. Sooner or later the current war will widen far beyond its present borders. We must organize now wherever we can so that communists, rather than nationalists or religious holy-rollers, become the leaders of the next People's Wars/working class insurrections that are sure to erupt.✪

Nationalist Alliance With Any Imperialist Bloc Deadly For Workers

MEXICO CITY, May 31 — Summit Meeting III of Latin American, Caribbean and European rulers exposed the European Union (EU) imperialists as too timid to sharpen their challenge (at least for now) of U.S. bosses in this region, the U.S. "backyard." Last issue, we reported the EU's top priority was increasing its reach In Latin America, but apparently its own economic problems have temporarily halted increased investments there. The EU wants to consolidate its hold on the new members. (The Czech and Slovakia Republics, Hungary and others are already part of German imperialism's sphere of influence.)

According to CEPAL (the UN's Economic Commission on Latin America), "the expansion of foreign investments all over the world has stopped." Capitalism's crisis of overproduction is still shrinking the international markets. Workers worldwide don't need any more capitalism, we need communism.

The EU even shrank from strongly condemning U.S. torture of Iraqi prisoners. German chancellor Schröder opposed criticizing the U.S. The Summit's final document used the euphemism "mistreatments," never mentioning the U.S. Apparently Europe's imperialists know they're also torturers and murderers and don't want to create any precedent for themselves. EU bosses also refused to condemn the U.S. commercial blockade of Cuba.

Nothing concrete was produced at this assembly of the champions of multi-lateralism, except an attempt to reach an economic pact with MERCOSUR (the Brazil-Argentina-led South American common market), which may be formalized at the next meeting. This EU step back from confronting the U.S. in its backyard is just temporary.

The Paris Le Monde editorializes that one reason is the EU is now concentrating on its expansion into Eastern Europe; "Latin America will suffer because of this." The 75 million people in the new EU member countries will form a common market of 454 million people. The new EU members will get 24.4 billion Euros from 2004-06 to control mass emigration from Eastern to Western Europe. So, for its own security, EU's bosses are now concentrating on their own backyard.

Capitalism's worldwide crisis has led some weaker rulers to use nationalism to deceive the masses about their wheelings and dealing with the different imperialist blocs. Workers should not fall for this trap.

Since Fidel Castro skipped this meeting, Venezuela's Hugo Chavez became the big media attraction. Chavez attacked ALCA (the U.S.-led Free Trade Agreement) and free-market policies, but then showed his lack of political and historical savvy. He implored the mythical forces of Quetzalcoatl and the dark-skinned Virgin of Guadalupe to "help free" Latin American. Quetzalcoatl was the god of the Aztec empire which exploited and enslaved other ethnic groups in ancient Mexico. The Spanish colonialists used the mythical appearance of the Virgin to force the ethnic population to submit to their rule.

Brazil's Lula, who just returned from making deals with China's bosses, said that "hunger is the most powerful WMD," killing 24,000 people a day, 11 children per minute. But to confess how deadly capitalism is doesn't mean doing something about it. Brazil has the most

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